

Remarks

Overview

The present application includes claims 1-25 with claims 14-24 being withdrawn. In this response, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 12, cancelled claims 14-24 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and added claims 26-34. As such, claims 1-13 and 25-34 are pending in this application.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-13 and 25 were rejected as being unpatentable over Published PCT Application No. WO01/79606 to Grönroos ("Grönroos") in view of US Published Patent Application No. 2003/0106658 to Ilmonen ("Ilmonen"). The rejected claims include independent claim 1.

Claim 1

Applicant submits that Grönroos, alone or in combination with Ilmonen, does not disclose, teach, or suggest the fibrous web of amended claim 1 comprising "an amount of solids, wherein the solids include fibrous material, and a filler included within the fibrous web, wherein the filler is a substance in a granular form, having a rotationally symmetrical shape and an inner part and a crust part, whereby the density of the inner part is lower than the crust part, the granular form settles in spaces between a plurality of fibers of the fibrous material so that bonds between the plurality of fibers of the fibrous material are maintained, wherein the density of the inner part is about 10 to 90% of that of the crust part, and the amount of filler used is within the range of approximately 30 to approximately 60% of the amount of solids."

Grönroos, as mentioned in the Abstract, "relates to a coating element, a coated fibrous web, and methods of manufacturing the same." The particle granules of Grönroos are part of a coating, not the underlying fibrous web. As stated in Grönroos on page 9, lines 19-29,

Generally, the size of the particle granules according to the invention is 1 to 100 pm, preferably about 5 to 20 um. The size of the coating elements can be regulated by the manufacturing process within the limits permitted by the process. The surface roughness and porosity of the web to be coated affect their optimum size, i. e., the coarser the surface that is coated, the larger the optimum size of the coating element used for the coating.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the particle granules are round, spherical or, more generally, rotationally symmetrical. Because of their shape, they pack fairly tightly on the surface of the fibrous web, attaching to one another, when mechanical compression is exerted on them, possibly simultaneously heating the surface. The coating process is described in detail below.

Grönroos relates to a coating composition, not the underlying fibrous web. As noted by the Examiner in the Office Action, Ilmonen also relates to coating. As stated in numbered paragraph [0027] of

Ilmonen, the "invention is indeed generally suitable for coating fibrous webs"

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the filler of the solids is "included within the fibrous web." As previously stated in the claim, "the filler is a substance in a granular form." This "granular form settles in spaces between a plurality of fibres of the fibrous material so that bonds between the plurality of fibres of the fibrous material are maintained." These amendments to claim 1 make it clear that the filler is part of the base fibrous web and not a coating over a fibrous web, such as disclosed in Grönroos. See for example, numbered paragraphs [0044] and [0048] of the present application published as US Published Patent Application No. 2005/0116010.

For at least this reason, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-13 and 25 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be in condition for allowance at least for the reasons given above in connection with claim 1, and for the further limitations of claims 2-13 and 25. Such action is respectfully requested.

New Claims

With this response, Applicant has added claims 26-34. Consideration and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Closing

Applicant submits that claims 1-13 and 25-34 are in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

If necessary, Applicants request that this response be considered a request for an extension of time appropriate for the response to be timely filed. Applicants request that any required fees needed beyond those submitted with this amendment be charged to the account of Baker & Daniels, Deposit Account No. 02-0390.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below should any question or comment arise during consideration of this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

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